

Why I'm Not Ashamed to be a Christian, Part 2 - Romans 1:16-17 – February 27th, 2011

- About three weeks ago, the Lord had really impressed upon my heart the need to talk about something that just so happened to be in our text.
- Naturally, I don't see this as a coincidence in that wherever you are at in the Word of God, it speaks to the very issues that you're dealing with.
- This is the active nature of God's Word. God's Word is alive, it's a sword, as it surgically cuts to the heart of the matter as it relates to our lives.

- Be that as it may, it was for this reason that I sensed from the Lord, that I needed to title this series; Why I'm Not Ashamed to be a Christian.
- I would suggest that as a whole the body of Christ here in America is ashamed of Christianity especially as it becomes increasingly unpopular.
- We cower and falter in the face of a world that is fast becoming even more hostile to the Gospel of salvation found only in Jesus the Christ.

William Newell - In these days of "respectable" Christianity, with its great cathedrals, churches, denominations, colleges, seminaries, "uplift movements," etc., you may say, Men no longer have any temptation to be "ashamed of the gospel." But lo, and behold, it is not!

Matthew 10:32-33 KJV **Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.**
(33) **But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.**

- I hope that this series will encourage us, and become for us, that needed reminder to be found faithful, not bashful in our profession of faith.
- Today will be part two in our study of just two verses here in chapter one. We looked at four reasons last week and will look at two more today.
- Now, for the benefit of those who were not with us last week, I want to, by way of review, quickly go through what we found in verse sixteen.

1. It's the truth (Verse 16a)

-v16a The reason Paul is eager to preach the Gospel, is because he's not ashamed of the Gospel. It's the truth and he can't be put to shame.

2. It's the power (Verse 16b)

-v16b - Paul says another reason he's not ashamed is because the gospel is the power of God, and he won't be intimidated to preach it.

3. It's for salvation (Verse 16c)

-v16c In what could be deemed a firm grasp of the obvious, Paul says that the gospel is the power of God for the salvation of all people.

4. It's for everyone (Verse 16d)

-v16d Here the beloved Apostle packs even more into the end of an already packed full verse by saying salvation is for everyone.

5. It's for righteousness (Verse 17a)

(17a) For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed...

- v17a Paul now takes it a step further and says that in the gospel, a righteousness from God is revealed, in that it is given to us who believe.
- It's important to know that this righteousness is that which we can be the recipients of as sinners who, by faith, put our trust in Jesus Christ.
- Now, there's something here that I would like for us to look at as it relates to having in the Gospel a righteousness from God being revealed.

- In order to do this, I want to pose a question; "have you ever had someone say something like this to you; 'and you call yourself a Christian?'"
- What they are asking by its very nature is implying that you have just said something, or done something that, to them, is not very Christian.
- In other words, they as non-Christians have this mistaken idea that Christians should always be and act perfect or they are just hypocrites.

- Let me ask you another question; "when you are accused of not being a very good Christian, are you manipulated into feeling guilt or shame?"
- Please don't misunderstand what I'm trying to say here. There are most certainly times when we should feel the conviction of the Holy Spirit.
- However that's not what the text is talking about. Let me explain; I am not and can-not be a perfect Christian but I am righteous as a Christian.

- It's not my own righteousness, lest it be as filthy rags, it's Christ's imputed righteousness because of the finished work on the cross at Calvary.
- Furthermore, I'm declared innocent because the only One Who was truly innocent became sin for me, and instead of me, when He did for me.
- Now, why would I ever need to be shamed, or intimidated. God sees not my sin, God sees only His Son, in Whom righteousness is revealed.

William Newell - ...This ... gives another reason why Paul was not ashamed of the good news: in this message concerning God's Son,—that He died for our sins, was buried, was raised,—there was brought to light,—made manifest—a righteousness of God which had indeed been prophesied...

6. It's by faith (Verse 17b)

(17b) ...a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

- v17b Paul now qualifies this righteousness as, by faith from first to last, saying that it was just as it was written: "The righteous will live by faith."
- In this verse, Paul is actually quoting the Old Testament prophet Habakkuk as it relates to the prophesied righteousness of God being by faith.

Habakkuk 2:4b NIV "...but the righteous will live by his faith—

William Newell - ...it is of imperative importance that we get the great fact quickly and forever fixed in our hearts that God declares men righteous ...wholly on the basis of Christ's atoning work,—to be believed in, rested upon, apart from all human works whatever. It was **on the principle of faith** by means of a message, and those exercising faith in the message that would be reckoned righteous,—apart from all "merit" or "works" whatever. This is the meaning of "from faith unto faith"—literally, **out of faith** [rather than works] **unto** [those who have] **faith**.

- By way of illustration, consider how it is that we're prone to, even quick to, put our faith in modern medicine to cure all of the ills of society.
- Let me hasten to say, that I in no way mean any disrespect to the physicians who attend this church, or to the medical field as a whole.
- However, in the spiritual sense metaphorically, we have "the" cure for "the" birth defect, without which all of mankind will die soon of.

- It's a blood born disease that we inherited when we were born, and the cure for this disease, which leads to death, is to be born again.
- To be born again, you need a blood transfusion from the one Who gave His blood for you, when He died your death for, and instead of, you.
- Absent this, yours and my incurable disease of sin, will lead to your eternal death in hell forever and ever. You need to be "blood" born again.

- If and when you are born again, you will live in heaven with Jesus in His Kingdom forever and ever, as the righteous who put your faith in Him.
- Have you put your faith in the great physician of physicians, the Lord Jesus the Christ as your Savior from the death sentence of sins disease?
- If you answered that question with a yes, then here's another question for you; "are you ashamed of this?" "If so, why, and for what reason?"

- Here's the take away, and I'll close with this; I won't be put to shame, or ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ for the following reasons:
- It's the truth, it's the power, it's for salvation, it's for everyone, it's for righteousness, and it's by faith. God has said it, and that should settle it!